

'AA' bantams suffer humbling exit

By **STEVE LeBLANC**
The Champion

When offensive spark fades, championship hopes usually follow suit.

Such was the case for Milton's AA bantams at neighbouring Appleby Arena Tuesday night.

Jeff Lynch missed an early breakaway and his teammates short-circuited with the man-advantage through the balance of the do-or-die showdown with Burlington.

The result was a 6-1 humbling, and subsequent five-points-to-one series loss in Tri County championship play.

"If Jeff had been able to score or we had capitalized on one or two of those powerplays it may have been a much different hockey game going into the third," said head coach John Nadalin, whose Winterhawks suffered an 0-for-7 powerplay whitewash and were finally grounded with two goals in the final few minutes of

play. "It's unfortunate, but sometimes you just come up flat and there's not much you can do about it."

Tuesday was no doubt an ego-bruising swan song for a team that went 20-5-3 through the regular season and had held its own during a couple of high-profile tournaments. "Yeah it's tough, but overall it was a great year," added Nadalin.

Nic Nevins delivered some big kick saves through the first two periods, but got the hook after surrendering the fourth goal shortly before intermission. Working the balance of the game was Joey DeAthe.

Jon Monk would cut a 2-0 Burlington lead in half three minutes into the middle stanza — burying a huge rebound off a blueline blast from Stephen Jackson. Mac Fillman also assisted on the lone tally.

While offering spirited play all night, absorbing and administering his fair share of punishment along the way, Lynch just couldn't find his scoring touch at Appleby.

He was denied on at least a handful of key scoring chances, including a third-period penalty shot. Burlington had one of its own in the second, but was turned back with a nifty stick save by Nevins.

Meanwhile, Milton's additional entry midgets were knocked off in two straight games last week by Arthur in their best-of-three Tri County finals. They bowed out March 25 at Milton Sports Centre, losing an epic 5-4 encounter in the last 18 seconds of play.

That heartbreaking loss, a back-and-forth affair until the crunch time tally, followed a 6-3 defeat in Arthur March 23.



Knowles and IceDogs get past Oshawa

Daryl Knowles and his Mississauga IceDogs are second-round bound.

While missing their Milton winger for game seven at the Hershey Centre Tuesday evening, the IceDogs advanced past the Oshawa Generals in commanding fashion — stomping them 6-1.

This marked their first playoff series win in franchise history.

Knowles was relegated to the injury reserve list for the do-or-die tilt, after taking a nasty slash across the arm the night before in Oshawa, where the Generals staved off elimination with a 3-2 overtime

decision.

The Milton IceDog played in every other first-round contest and drew an assist in game five's 5-1 victory last Friday. Teammate and former Milton Merchant Brad Efthimiou scored the fourth goal in Tuesday's series clincher.

Mississauga began second-round play against the Barrie Colts last night in Barrie. Game two goes Sunday evening at the Hershey Centre.

Meanwhile, fellow Miltonian Elgin Reid had a rather short-lived introduction to OHL playoff action.

His Ottawa 67s pushed their first-round series with the Brampton Battalion to the limit, but were toppled 3-1 Tuesday night in game seven action at the Civic Centre.

Ottawa grabbed an early lead but just couldn't hang on, surrendering second and third-period goals before an empty netter sealed the deal. This followed a big 6-3 victory in game six in Brampton Sunday evening.

A rookie defenceman and first-round draft pick last year for the 67s, Reid didn't register any playoff points but did compete in all seven games.

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